

NOTICE OF A NEW AMERICAN FORM OF MARSUPIAL.

By R. F. TOMES, CORR. MEMB.

Genus HYRACODON, Tomes.

General form somewhat slender. Tail as long as the head and body, tapering evenly to a fine point, Feet long, and furnished with an opposable thumb; nails somewhat long and pointed. Head rather long; muzzle pointed; ears of medium size, ovoid. *Upper incisors*: middle teeth simple, pointed, small, and in a vertical position; the following two large, thick, and short, but having a semi-acute point, which has a very backward direction; the following one, or fourth, similar, but very small; the fifth, or canine, separated from the preceding by a considerable interval, small, conical, acute, and nearly vertical in position; the two succeeding teeth nearly similar. *Lower incisors*: middle teeth long, nearly straight, and horizontal in position, as in the Shrews; the four following teeth more or less conical in form, closely packed together, and sloping forward, small in size, and evenly diminishing from the first to the last; the fifth tooth has a canine-like form, a little more prominent than the preceding, and curved forward; the sixth small, conical, vertical in position, and widely separated from the fifth.

H. FULIGINOSUS, n. s.

Tail sparingly covered with short hairs of a dusky colour, throughout the whole of its length, both above and below; upper surface of the feet sparingly covered with hairs similar to those of the tail; ears nearly naked, and of a dark brown colour; fur on all parts of the body of a deep sooty-brown, scarcely paler on the under parts; all the naked parts brown.

Length of the head and body	3	8
——— of the tail	3	8
——— of the head	1	2

Hab. Ecuador; collected by Mr. Fraser.

ON THE SPECIES OF CRASPEDOCEPHALUS WHICH OCCUR IN THE PROVINCE OF BAHIA, BRAZIL. BY DR. OTHO WUCHERER, CORR. MEMB.

In a former paper, containing the first portion of a list of the Ophidians which I had been able to collect in this province, I abstained from certain remarks on some species of the above genus until I should have collected more ample materials to corroborate them.

In the first place, I was struck by the fact that all the specimens of "Jararaca" which had up to that time come to my notice were very similar, and belonged to one species, *Craspedocephalus atrox*. Having collected more than thirty specimens, I proceeded to examine them more closely for comparison. Dr. Gray, in the 'Catalogue of Viperine Snakes in the Brit. Mus.' 1849, comments on the difficulty

of separating the species of this genus. His diagnoses do not agree exactly with those of Schlegel in his 'Essai,' nor with those of Duméril and Bibron in their 'Erpétologie Générale,' I may therefore be excused if I offer the following remarks on my specimens. In my former paper I stated that I had neither seen *Craspedocephalus lanceolatus* nor *C. brasiliensis*. At the present time I have examined very nearly forty specimens of "Jararaca," all of which, except three, agree sufficiently in every character, and are, according to the descriptions of herpetologists, referable to *C. atrox*. These three specimens show certain slight differences which justify a doubt of their specific identity with the others.

Dr. Gray mentions *C. atrox* as having seven upper labial shields. Schlegel, in his 'Essai,' i. p. 189, and again ii. p. 535, describes this species as having eight labial shields; still this may perhaps be considered a mistake, for in his plate 19 of the above work *C. atrox* is represented as having only seven upper labial shields. Duméril and Bibron make no allusion to this character in *C. atrox*. Now all the specimens of *C. atrox* which I have had occasion to examine have seven upper labial shields. Only one has on one side eight, which must be considered an irregularity.

Dr. Gray describes *C. brasiliensis* as having nine or ten upper labial shields, the hinder ones of which are smaller; Schlegel describes it as having nine; and Duméril and Bibron do not mention the number of labial shields at all.

The three specimens differing from those of *C. atrox* mentioned above have all eight upper labial shields on each side, the last one narrower than the last one in *C. atrox*.

A statement I made in my former paper, that my specimens of *C. atrox* differed from those described by herpetologists in having fewer longitudinal rows of scales, I now take the opportunity to rectify. The number of longitudinal rows of scales in the species of this genus is not always mentioned as a specific character, and indeed it does not appear very serviceable as such. Schlegel's *C. jararaca*, the *C. brasiliensis* of Dr. Gray's catalogue, has twenty-seven rows of scales; of *C. atrox* he says (Essai, ii. p. 536), "On compte quelquefois 29 rangées d'écailles," leaving it perhaps hence to be inferred that it has generally a lesser number, or twenty-seven, like the one just described, which is *C. brasiliensis*. Duméril and Bibron (vii. p. 1509 and p. 1511) give to *C. atrox* from twenty-nine to thirty-two, to *C. brasiliensis* twenty-seven rows. All my specimens of *C. atrox*, with few exceptions, have twenty-seven rows of scales, a few having twenty-five. Of the three specimens differing from them, two have twenty-five and one twenty-three rows of scales.

Schlegel and Duméril and Bibron draw some specific differences from the shape of the head, the former saying (ii. p. 535) that the snout of *C. atrox* is more conical, by which I suppose is meant more rounded, Duméril and Bibron stating that the sharp edge on the anterior part of the head is almost effaced, and does not reach back to the orbits, furthermore that the scales on the anterior part of the head are comparatively much larger than on the posterior part in *C.*

brasiliensis; but all these differences do not appear very striking in Schlegel's excellent figures on plate 19 of the 'Essai.' My three specimens distinct from *C. atrox* would rather agree in these points with the descriptions of *C. brasiliensis* of these authors.

Schlegel points to the larger size of the superciliary and superior labial shields in *C. atrox*, to its larger and more numerous mental shields, to the stronger keel on its scales, showing a strong tendency to take the form of a tubercle, by which I understand that it is higher and shorter, not reaching the tip. Now these characters, if they occurred simultaneously, might very well serve as some of the specific characters; and it does not appear just in Duméril and Bibron to say (vii. p. 1508), "M. Schlegel, dans l'embarras où il s'est trouvé, n'a indiqué que des différences peu importantes, tirées de la forme des écailles dont la carène paraît plus forte; des lames noires allongées, ou de l'étendue relative des plaques surciliaires ainsi que les plaques labiales,"—although they confess their inability to suggest any better characters, and still persist in considering them individuals belonging to two species, having no other basis for their separation than the frequent occurrence of *C. atrox* in Guiana, whilst the other species is never found there.

Comparing my three specimens, which differ from those of *C. atrox* in the last-mentioned respects, and first as regards the size of the superciliary shields, I cannot come to any very precise decision, as they are not full-grown. Comparing with one another old and young specimens of *C. atrox*, I find that not only the superciliary, but all other head-shields are proportionately larger in young individuals, so is the pit in the cheek; and the whole head is flatter, especially the occiput, and more elongate in adult specimens. I compared the three specimens with those of corresponding size of *C. atrox*, but I could not arrive at any decided opinion; and, considering the difference in size of the figures in Schlegel's plate 19, they also do not allow me to draw any safe inference from the relative size of the superciliary shields in each species. Besides, I am not acquainted with the absolute size each species may attain. As regards the size and number of the mental shields, I cannot find any very striking difference; in some specimens of *C. atrox* I have found one, in others two, and even three pairs of chin-shields; in the three specimens which differ in other respects from them, I always found only one pair. The labial shields are certainly smaller in my three specimens which do not agree with *C. atrox*. But more striking still is the shape of the scales and their keel. The three specimens I am inclined to regard as referable to *C. brasiliensis* have narrower scales, their keel lower, narrower, longer, and reaching to their tip. At first glance these specimens have a less hirsute appearance than those of *C. atrox*. In accordance with the narrowness and the smaller number of their scales, their body appears more slender.

I am well aware that the coloration does not afford safe specific characters, except in comparatively few instances; but as all the specimens I referred to *C. atrox* agree so well in this respect, dif-

fering from my three supposed *C. brasilienses*, which again agree among themselves, I may be allowed to state in what one and the other are peculiar. The specimens I refer to *C. atrox* are all greyish yellow or olive, and have along the body irregular brown, black-edged spots with sinuated margins, which occupy about as much space as the ground-colour. In young specimens the colours are generally brighter, and the spots more distinct. Underneath they are all, without exception, chequered with dark grey or black.

The three specimens of supposed *C. brasiliensis* are olive-green; similar brown, black-edged spots, with sinuated margins, occupy their back, but occur at much wider intervals, so that they occupy much less space than the ground-colour; underneath, all three are dirty-yellow, punctulated with black, but not at all chequered.

These differences appear very striking, but I refrain from attaching undue weight to them. Schlegel describes some specimens of *C. brasiliensis* with "larges taches carrées" (Essai, ii. p. 533). Duméril and Bibron are not explicit as regards the coloration of *C. brasiliensis*.

In Prof. Jan's 'Prodrome d'une iconographie descriptive des Ophidiens,' published in 1859, I find *Trigonocephalus Newwiedi*, which is synonymous with *C. atrox*, enumerated as a distinct species. I also find that Duméril and Bibron consider specimens with a white tip to the tail as a variety; I may therefore be allowed to make the following remarks. Seven of my specimens of *C. atrox* are quite young, their total length ranging from 0.333 to 0.382; in all the tip of the tail is white. Besides these, I have seen many other small specimens, which always showed the same peculiarity. In two specimens of 0.620 and 0.530 total length, which may be considered half-grown, the tip of the tail is lighter-coloured than the rest of the body, showing the transition to the black colour in the tail of adults. From this I think it reasonable to infer that the difference in the colour of the tip of the tail in individuals of *C. atrox* depends on their age, and does not constitute a variety, much less a species. The Brazilians, however, consider small individuals as a distinct species, which they call "Caisacca." Of the young of *C. brasiliensis* Schlegel states expressly (Essai, ii. p. 533), "Les petits offrent le bout de la queue blanc."

The largest of my three supposed specimens of *C. brasiliensis* has a total length of 0.872, and may be considered therefore about half-grown; the tip of its tail is lighter-coloured than the body; underneath to a greater extent, and above at the extreme tip it is quite white. In one of the other two specimens the tip of the tail is lighter-coloured, in the other white.

According to the statement of Schlegel, the iris of *C. brasiliensis* is dark red; he does not mention how the iris of *C. atrox* is coloured. In many live specimens of the latter species which I have seen, I always found it of a dark grey. I never saw a live specimen of a snake corresponding to my supposed specimens of *C. brasiliensis*. In these the colour of the iris is not preserved.

As to *C. lanceolatus*, I very much doubt whether it occurs in Brazil at all.

Trigonocephalus Landsbergii, Schl., *Bothrops Castelnaudi*, and *Bothrops alternans*, D. & B., have not yet come under my notice.

Of *Craspedocephalus bilineatus* I have seen eight specimens—seven from the vicinity of Villa Vicosa (where the Prince of Wied, who first described the species), found his specimen, and one of unknown origin.

I had previously observed that some Brazilian species of Snakes (as *Spilotes variabilis* and *S. pæcilostoma*, *Coryphodon pantherinus*, *Xenodon colubrinus*, &c.) have the habit of striking the ground rapidly with their tail when irritated; I had lately occasion to notice the same peculiarity in a large specimen of *Craspedocephalus atrox*.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Additional Observations on Chelymys dentata.

By Dr. J. E. GRAY, F.R.S. &c.

IN the previous Number of the 'Annals' (p. 98), I described a new species of *Chelymys*, from the Upper Victoria River, brought to England by my late friend Mr. Elsey, and not by Mr. Macgillivray, as inadvertently stated in that paper.

When I made that description, I had forgotten that we had also an adult specimen, brought from the same locality at the same time, which is doubtless the adult of this species; and this specimen proves that the dentated form of the margin is only a peculiarity of the younger state of the species; and therefore the specific name is not one that I should have chosen if I had had the adult form of the species before me when I selected it. But as the margin is not dentated in the young of the other species, it is still characteristic. The species is easily known from the other, both in its adult and young state, by the absence of the nuchal plate.

The adult shell is oblong-ovate, solid, and high; the back is worn smooth, and the margin is entire, the edge over the legs being rather expanded, and the hinder part over the tail rather inflexed; the vertebral plates are very long, slender, with straight parallel sides, nearly twice as long as they are wide; the hinder part of the fourth shield is rather narrowed. The sternum is narrow, rounded in front, and with a deep semicircular notch behind, high on the sides. The underside is black, with a few unequal-sized yellow blotches. The length is 13 inches; width over the back $10\frac{1}{2}$ inches.

On a New Genus of Humming-Birds.

By JOHN GOULD, F.R.S.

To the Editors of the Annals and Magazine of Natural History.

GENTLEMEN,—I send for insertion in your next Number a description of a new and very singular Humming-Bird which I have lately received from Ecuador. Not only does it differ specifically from every other with which I am acquainted, but it also differs in its structure from every form comprised in the great family of Trochilidæ. I therefore propose to call it